

United States Code, the Chair, on behalf of the Committee on Finance, announces the designation of the following Senators as members of the Joint Committee on Taxation:

The Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS).

The Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER).

The Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD).

The Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH).

PRESIDENT NEEDS TO GET SERIOUS ABOUT ADDRESSING NATION'S HEALTH CARE NEEDS

(Mr. SIREs asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIREs. Madam Speaker, the skyrocketing price of health care continues to be a major concern for millions of Americans. Skyrocketing costs are causing the number of uninsured Americans to increase by 1 million people every year since the President took office.

Last year, during his State of the Union Address, the President promised his administration would "confront the rising cost of health care, strengthen the doctor-patient relationship, and help people afford the insurance coverage they need." The President did not live up to his promise.

Madam Speaker, the President can no longer afford to provide lip service on health care. The proposal that the President will unveil tonight will do nothing to lower health care costs, nor will it provide health insurance to more Americans. He should reject this proposal and instead work with this Democratic Congress to help come up with real health care solutions.

CONDEMNING THE BRUTAL MURDER OF HRANT DINK

(Mr. ROYCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I rise to condemn the brutal murder of newspaper editor and leading figure in the Armenian genocide debate in Turkey, Hrant Dink.

Last Friday freedom of speech suffered a setback as Dink was shot three times in the head in broad daylight outside of his office. As a Turkish citizen of Armenian descent, he had gained notoriety in Turkish society for the court cases brought against him, in which he faced jail time for simply talking of that genocide. Nationalists see such statements, they say, as insults to the honor of Turks.

Well, Dink was mourned worldwide, and journalists like him and Nobel Laureate Orhan Pamuk continue to be persecuted by suppressive laws that seek to stifle discussion on matters that are claimed to be insulting to Turkish identity.

It is my sincere hope that the Turkish Government uses this tragedy to revisit its laws and open up to free speech. The laws themselves are a catalyst for this type of intolerance.

STATE OF UNION ADDRESS PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY TO BEGIN WORKING IN BIPARTISAN FASHION

(Mr. BRALEY of Iowa asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, last November the American people demanded real results to improve their everyday lives and strengthen middle-class families. Tonight President Bush has the opportunity to change course and work in a bipartisan way to deliver results for America's families.

The new Democratic Congress has not waited for the President to ask. In our first 100 hours, this House has already succeeded in passing legislation to raise the minimum wage, expand Federal funding for stem cell research, implement the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission, require negotiation for lower prescription drug costs, make college more affordable and end subsidies for Big Oil to invest in clean, renewable energy.

Tonight I would hope that the President would voice support for these popular bills. After all, they received strong bipartisan support here in the House. On average, 67 Republicans supported each of these bills.

The Democratic Congress looks forward to working with the President to take America in a new direction, but in order to do that, the President needs to realize that he cannot continue down the same road he has traveled for the last 6 years. We will see tonight if he has learned that lesson.

CONGRESS NEEDS TO PASS THE SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SELF-DETERMINATION ACT

(Mr. WALDEN of Oregon asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Madam Speaker, the failure of Congress to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act amounts to breach of faith to the more than 600 forested counties across America.

For Grant County, Oregon, where 61 percent of the land in the county is Federal, this means the school district will now be forced to eliminate essential school programs and nearly double class sizes, delay school repairs and begin telling teachers, administrators and staff who gets to stay and who has to go.

School Superintendent Newell Cleaver puts it this way: "We are watching our infrastructure being destroyed as this issue is debated in Congress. This program is the difference between rural

schools remaining competitive with urban schools or not."

Grant County Commissioner Boyd Britton says, "If the Federal Government would simply allow us to manage these natural resources, we would not need these funds. However, losing these funds will be felt by every man, woman and child in the county, especially the school children."

My colleagues, Congress needs to pass H.R. 17 and keep the Federal Government's word to timbered communities and the citizens who live there. Time is running out for them.

TIME TO GET TO THE PEOPLE'S AGENDA

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, President Bush will deliver his State of the Union Address tonight. The American people have been very clear in what they want. They want a change in the tone, they want a change in direction in Iraq, and they want our national priorities to focus on helping families.

The President should use this opportunity to answer some questions. I know my constituents would like to hear three things from the State of the Union: One, how is the President going to work with Congress to really fix this country's broken health care system; two, how is the President going to bring our troops home swiftly and safely; and, three, when is the President really going to return to the domestic priorities.

The Democratically controlled House and Senate are ready for him to change his agenda, change his tone and get to the people's agenda. So tonight we hear from our President.

CONGRESS AND AMERICA MUST BACK AMERICAN TROOPS

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I filed a bill to support our troops in harm's way, and I rise in support of them, and in support of this country and this Congress backing our brave men and women in uniform 100 percent.

I fear what all the talk of Washington about pulling funding for our troops is going to do to the privates and sergeants stationed in Camp Blue Diamond, think about it, for the next 11 months.

We are elected to protect our men and women in uniform, just as they protect our freedoms every day. Our guys are fighting for America. They are fighting for you and me.

All this talk of doom and gloom hurts mission success and stifles troop morale. It is imperative our Nation backs our troops to the hilt. As long as we deploy men and women across the